

Customer No.: 31561
Docket No.: 13292-US-PA
Application No.: 10/709,767

REMARKS

Present Status of the Application

Applicants appreciate that claims 5-7 are considered being patentable.

Claims 1-2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maru (U. S. Patent 6,471,324; hereinafter Maru). Applicants have amended claim 1 and claim 5, wherein allowable claim 5 has been rewritten into independent claim. Claims 1-2 and 4-7 remain pending in the present application, and reconsideration of those claims is respectfully requested.

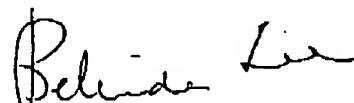
Discussion of Office Action Rejections

The undersigned would like to thank Examiner Garcia for granting a telephonic interview on February 7, 2007, during which the 35 USC §102 rejections by the Maru reference were discussed. Examiner Garcia agreed that the proposed amendments defined over the existing prior art Maru. In response thereto, a Request for Continued Examination is submitted with preliminary amendments to the claims, which the Office considers as definable over the prior art reference.

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Respectfully submitted,


Belinda Lee

Registration No.: 46,863

Jiang Chyun Intellectual Property Office
7th Floor-1, No. 100
Roosevelt Road, Section 2
Taipei, 100
Taiwan
Tel: 011-886-2-2369-2800
Fax: 011-886-2-2369-7233
Email: belinda@jicpgroup.com.tw
Usa@jicpgroup.com.tw